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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 8085th meeting of the Security Council, held on 6 November 2017, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Myanmar", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council condemns the attacks against Myanmar security forces carried out by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army ("ARSA") on 25 August in Rakhine State and expresses grave concern over accounts that ARSA has been responsible for human rights abuses.

"The Security Council strongly condemns the widespread violence that has taken place in Rakhine State, Myanmar, since 25 August, which has led to the mass displacement of more than 607,000 individuals, the vast majority belonging to the Rohingya community.

"The Security Council further expresses grave concern over reports of human rights violations and abuses in Rakhine State, including by the Myanmar security forces, in particular against persons belonging to the Rohingya community, including those involving the systematic use of force and intimidation, killing of men, women, and children, sexual violence, and including the destruction and burning of homes and property.

"The Security Council reaffirms its strong commitment to the sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity, and unity of Myanmar, and *stresses* its support to the Government of Myanmar in the pursuit and consolidation of its ongoing democratic transition process, emphasising the importance of reforms to promote accountable government institutions, especially in the security and justice sectors and to build the confidence of the people of Myanmar.

"The Security Council stresses the primary responsibility of the Government of Myanmar to protect its population including through respect for the rule of law and the respect, promotion and protection of human rights.

"The Security Council calls upon the Government of Myanmar to ensure no further excessive use of military force in Rakhine State, to restore civilian administration and apply the rule of law, and to take immediate steps in accordance with their obligations and commitments to respect human rights, including the human rights of women, children, and persons belonging to vulnerable groups, without discrimination and regardless of ethnicity, religion, or citizenship status, further calls on the Government of Myanmar to implement

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measures in line with resolution 2106 (2013) to prevent and respond to incidents of sexual violence, and encourages in this regard the Government of Myanmar to work with the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict.

"The Security Council expresses further grave concern over accounts of inter-communal violence and calls upon the Government of Myanmar, to take all necessary measures to counter incitement to violence or hatred and restore peace and inter-communal harmony through dialogue, a comprehensive reconciliation process and by respecting the rule of law.

"The Security Council expresses alarm at the significantly and rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation in Rakhine State and grave concern at the increasing number of refugees and internally displaced persons, which has a destabilising impact in the region.

"The Security Council notes the initial steps taken by the Government of Myanmar and humanitarian agencies to provide humanitarian assistance to individuals in Rakhine State, including through granting access to the World Food Programme, expresses its deep concern that humanitarian access remains severely limited and that humanitarian needs exceed the current levels of provision, and demands the Government of Myanmar to grant immediate, safe and unhindered access to United Nations agencies and their partners, as well as other domestic and international non-governmental organisations, to provide humanitarian assistance in Rakhine State, as well as to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel.

"The Security Council highly commends the efforts undertaken by the Government of Bangladesh, with the assistance of the United Nations, their partners and other non-governmental organisations, to provide safety, shelter, and humanitarian assistance to those who have fled the violence, *encourages* the Government of Bangladesh to continue to do so until those who have fled the violence can return voluntarily, and in conditions of safety and dignity to their homes in Myanmar, with due regard to the principle of non-refoulement, *welcomes* states' provision of support to Bangladesh, and *encourages* states able to do so to provide further financial and logistical support to Bangladesh, the United Nations, in particular to the United Nations's Rohingya Refugee Crisis Humanitarian Response Plan, and other humanitarian partners engaged in this effort.

"The Security Council welcomes the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on 24 October 2017 between the Governments of Myanmar and Bangladesh on the situation in Rakhine State, urges the Government of Myanmar to work with the Government of Bangladesh and the United Nations to allow the voluntary return of all refugees in conditions of safety and dignity to their homes in Myanmar, welcomes in this regard the commitment to establish of the Joint Working Group between the Governments of Myanmar and Bangladesh to implement this process, urges the Governments of Myanmar and Bangladesh to invite the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other relevant international organisations to participate fully in the Joint Working Group and implementation of the returns process, further calls upon the Government of Myanmar to expedite the voluntary return of all internally displaced persons in conditions of safety and dignity to their homes in Myanmar.

"The Security Council welcomes the Government of Myanmar's decision to establish "the Union Enterprise Mechanism for Humanitarian Assistance, Resettlement, and Development in Rakhine" ("the Union Enterprise Mechanism") as well as its commitment to ensure that humanitarian assistance and development work undertaken by the Union Enterprise Mechanism is provided for the benefit

of all communities in Rakhine State without discrimination and regardless of religion or ethnicity, urges the Government of Myanmar to ensure the Union Enterprise Mechanism supports the voluntary, safe, and dignified return of displaced individuals and refugees to their homes in Rakhine States, and to allow UN agencies to operate with full access in Rakhine State.

"The Security Council *urges* the Governments of Myanmar and Bangladesh, the United Nations, and other humanitarian partners to pay special attention to the specific needs of women and girls in all assessments, planning, and delivery of humanitarian assistance and to ensure the availability of specialised medical and psychosocial services for survivors of sexual violence;

"The Security Council commends the continued efforts of countries of the region and regional organisations, in particular the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and the European Union, in providing humanitarian assistance and supporting dialogue between all relevant stakeholders.

"The Security Council calls upon the Government of Myanmar to address the root causes of the crisis in Rakhine State by respecting, promoting and protecting human rights, without discrimination and regardless of ethnicity or religion, including by allowing freedom of movement, equal access to basic services, and equal access to full citizenship for all individuals.

"The Security Council welcomes the Government of Myanmar's public commitment to implement the recommendations of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State chaired by Dr Kofi Annan as well as the establishment of a ministerial-level committee to implement the recommendations, and urges all parts of the Government of Myanmar to work together to implement these recommendations swiftly and in full.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of undertaking transparent investigations into allegations of human rights abuses and violations, including sexual violence and abuse and violence against children, and of holding to account all those responsible for such acts to provide justice for victims.

"In this regard, the Security Council calls upon the Government of Myanmar to cooperate with all relevant United Nations bodies, mechanisms and instruments, in particular the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and to continue further consultations on opening a country office of the OHCHR.

"The Security Council calls upon the Government of Myanmar to urgently grant domestic and international media organisations full and unhindered access to Rakhine State and throughout the country and to ensure the safety and security of media personnel.

"The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to continue to provide his good offices and to pursue his discussions with the Government of Myanmar, involving all relevant stakeholders, to offer assistance to the Government of Myanmar in this regard and encourages him to consider, as appropriate, appointing a Special advisor on Myanmar.

"The Security Council remains determined to continue to closely follow the situation in Myanmar and requests the Secretary-General to brief the Security Council on developments on the situation in Rakhine after 30 days from the adoption of this statement."